

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8790

USMISSION GENEVA

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PASS STR FOR AMBASSADOR DENT FROM SMITH
GENEVA FOR PHELAN

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, KS

SUBJECT: TEXTILES: MFA DISCUSSIONS WITH ROKG

1. BILATERAL TALKS WITH ROKG OFFICIALS RE MFA RENEWAL
EXTREMELY USEFUL AND POSITIVE. ASSISTANT MINISTER CHOI
HO JOONG (MC/R: CH'OE HO-CHUNG) OF MOFA TOLD USDEL
AUGUST 9 THAT ROKG IN FAVOR OF MFA RENEWAL FOR THREE
TO FIVE MORE YEARS. CHOI INDICATED ROKG WOULD TRY TO
SEEK QUOTE IMPROVEMENTS END QUOTE.

2. AMONG AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT CITED BY CHOI WERE:

(A) SHARPER DEFINITION OF MARKET DISRUPTION, ESPECIALLY
WHAT IS MEANT BY SHARP AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES AND
GREATER EMPHASIS ON PRICE COMPARISONS, TAKING QUALITY
MORE FULLY INTO ACCOUNT; (B) CLEARER DEFINITION OF
QUOTE MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCTION QUOTE; I.E. THE NORDIE
PROBLEM; (C) REEXAMINATION OF CUMULATIVE CONCEPT; I.E.
HOW ESSENTIAL IS THIS TO USG? (USDEL'S IMMEDIATE
RESPONSE WAS UNEQUIVOCAL ON THIS, AS WE TOLD CHOI THIS
WAS LINCH PIN IN US TEXTILE PROGRAM. CHOI, AS FORMER
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TSB REP, WAS NOT SURPRISED BY US RESPONSE AND DROPPED

MATTER.)

3. USDEL THEN MET WITH MCI OFFICIALS, INCLUDING NOH CHIN SHIK (MC/R: NO CHIN-SIK). NOH SAID FINAL ROKG THINKING ON IMPROVEMENTS IT MIGHT SEEK NOT YET COMPLETED BUT INDICATED FOLLOWING AREAS: (A) MARKET DISRUPTION DEFINITION. IMPORTING COUNTRIES OUGHT NOT TO HAVE UNILATERAL RIGHT TO DETERMINE WHEN MARKET DISRUPTION OCCURS. THERE NEEDS TO BE A BETTER STANDARD; (B) GROWTH RATES; (C) OPERATION OF TSB. TSB OUGHT TO HAVE MORE POWER TO SETTLE ISSUES; (D) ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE. MFA SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED IN TERMS OF COMMITTING IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO PURSUE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE MORE VIGOROUSLY. USDEL COUNTERED BY REMINDING NOM OF PROBLEMS EVERY COUNTRY WOULD HAVE IN TERMS OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY ON FIRST, THIRD, AND FOURTH POINTS. NOH UNDERSTOOD THIS AND SAID THAT MAYBE THESE ISSUES COULD BE SOLVED IF IMPORTING COUNTRIES WOULD FULLY ABIDE BY EXISTING MFA PROVISIONS.

4. DISCUSSIONS WITH BOTH MOFA AND MCI WERE REMARKABLY FREE OF THEOLOGICAL DEBATE OR THIRD WORLD POSTURING. ROKG APPEARS TO RECOGNIZE NECESSITY OR INEVITABILITY OF EXTENDED MFA AND SEEMS MUCH LESS ANTAGONISTIC TO MFA THAN IN 1973. OF COURSE, THEY HAVE BENEFITED SUBSTANTIALLY BY MFA (PERHAPS AT EXPENSE OF SOME SMALLER, NEW STARTER COUNTRIES) AND THEY CLEARLY WANT TO BE CERTAIN THAT NOTHING THREATENS CONTINUATION OF STABILITY AND EXPANSION OF THEIR TEXTILE EXPORTS. WHILE IT IS CERTAIN THE ROKG WILL PRESS VERY HARD IN DECEMBER IN GENEVA FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN MFA, USDEL HAS COME AWAY FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS WITH DISTINCT FEELING THAT ROKG WANTS THE MFA EXTENDED AND WILL NOT RPT NOT PUSH FOR ANY OUTLANDISH DEMANDS WHICH WOULD THREATEN THE MFA. STERN

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